

Belvidere
Genessee River and State Road 408
Angelica Township
Allegany County
New York

HABS No. NY-6011

HABS
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2-BELV
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

BELVIDERE

HABS No. NY-6011

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(Page 1)

Location: Genessee River and State Road 408, Angelica Township, Allegany County, New York

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bromeley

Present Occupant: Same.

Present Use: Residence.

Significance: A manor house in the Federal Style, built as a residence and land office for John Barker Church and his son Phillip Church, who were involved in the original development and sub-division of a 100,000 acre tract in what is now Allegany County, New York. Original style attributed to Benjamin Latrobe.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1806-1810.
2. Architect: The design of the house has been attributed to Benjamin Latrobe.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title to the property on which the house stands.

1797	Sachems, Chiefs and Warriors of the Seneca Indians To Robert Morris, Esq. (September 15, 1797)
1799	Robert Morris To Alexander Hamilton (nominee for John Barker Church)
1807	John Barker Church To Phillip Church
1864	Will dated December 31, 1864. Phillip Church To Anna Matilda Church (wife)
1866	Anna Matilda Church To Richard Church

1892 Foreclosure.
Richard Church
To
Rochester Savings Bank

1892 Deed, dated January 17, 1893.
Rochester Savings Bank
To
Fred B. Keaney

1910 Fred B. Keaney
To
Louise Squires Clark

1947 Deed, dated August 22, 1947, recorded in Deeds Liber
406, folio 323, (Allegany County).
Louise Squires Clark
To
Robert and Marian Bromeley

4. Builder, suppliers: E. Probyn, New York. Probyn signed the plans "A. and Builder" which raises a question as to the architect for the original design.
5. Original Plans and construction: For floor plans of the house see data pages 7 & 8. Original plans are in the collection of the Allegany Public Library in Angelica, New York.
6. Alterations and additions: In 1812, a long one-story brick wing was added and used as offices and utility area. About 1870 a mansard roof was installed on the long wing, and the resulting second story used as a dormitory for farm laborers.

B. Historical Context:

John B. Church was a former English M.P., who befriended the cause of the American Revolution, was Commissary General to the French Army in America, and financially aided the new government. He was the founder of the Bank of Manhattan Company and the Bank of North America. Church married Angelica Schuyler, daughter of Gen. Phillip Schuyler and sister of Elizabeth, Alexander Hamilton's wife. John and Angelica Church befriended many refugees from the French Revolution, helping them settle in Allegany County and elsewhere in the U.S. It was John Church who provided the pistols used in the Hamilton-Burr duel. These same pistols were used in the Church-Burr duel and the fatal duel between Hamilton's son, Phillip, and Eaker. The pistols reposed at Belvidere until the late 19th century.

Phillip Schuyler Church was aide-de-camp to Alexander Hamilton; the first judge in Allegany County; and a founder of both the Erie Canal and the Erie R.R. He married Anna Matilda

Stewart, the daughter of Gen. Walter Stewart, a general in the American Revolution.

The current owners of the property, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bromeley, have been involved in area newspapers, radio, hotel and insurance companies. They have invested heavily in time and money to research and restore the mansion.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A large, Federal style, country mansion, which was built by a family who developed the upper Genessee River Valley.
2. Condition of Fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The main block has two-and-one-half stories over a partial basement. The west wing is one story over a basement. The east wing is two stories over a basement. The service wing is one-and-one-half stories.
2. Foundations: Quarried ledge stone, gray and brown in color.
3. Wall Construction: The original house is quarried ledge stone with brick quoining and trim. The service wing is brick painted grey.
4. Structural System, Framing: Masonry exterior bearing walls, wood joist floors and roofs, and wood stud partitions.
5. Porches, Stoops, Bulkheads: There is a porch on the north side of the main block, which is an entrance porch one story between projecting wings, with a wooden floor and steps, 4 round wood columns on high square bases, a wooden cornice similar to the main cornice.

There is a pedimented two story projecting porch, with four giant wooden columns on high square bases, camozzi capitals, wooden floor, roof and steps, wooden pediment, and wooden cornice.

The west wing of the main floor has a flight of stone steps up to the door at the first floor level. There are stone steps in a stone areaway down to the basement door.

There is a continuous porch on the east and south sides of the service wing with a wooden floor and ceiling; on the south side the columns are Roman doric capitals which

apparently date from the original construction wing (c. 1815); the four columns on the east end are square wooden columns which apparently date from c. 1870.

The porches on the north side of the service wing apparently date from the early 20th century.

6. The main block has four brick chimneys and the service wing has two brick chimneys.
7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance is a single door with side lights and an elliptical transom. The present leaded glass in the transom and sidelights dates from the early twentieth century. The original door was a six-panel door.

The door on the west side of the west wing of the original house is modern, with stone jambs and a flat radial brick arched lintel.

The opening from the east wing of the original house to the porch of the service wing is apparently original. It has brick jambs and a flat radial brick arch at the head. The door itself was originally six-panel, but the upper four panels and rails have been replaced with one piece of glass.

- b. Windows: Typical windows are wooden, double hung, six-over-six lights, sash windows. Some of the windows have fixed louvered shutters, and those that do not have vestiges of original hardware for shutters.

The main block of the original building has two windows opening on the porch and three windows on the second floor. There are dormer windows at the roof line on the north, east and west. On the south, two tall triple hung sash windows extend to the floor to permit access to the porch. There are two Venetian windows on the second floor and an oval window in the pediment. The first and second floor windows are recessed in arched brick niche.

The north wall of the west wing has a Venetian window at the first floor level set into a recessed brick niche. A small four-paned window lights the basement area. The south wall of the west wing has a similar arch, but the windows here are unusual: the head of the arch contains a paned lunette whose upper sash has six panes and whose lower sash has twelve panes.

The north wall of the east wing has a Venetian window like that of the west wing and two double hung sash windows, six-over-six lights. The south wall of the east wing has a lunette window similar to that of the west wing.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The main block has a hipped roof, the west wing has a gable roof, the east wing has a hipped roof and the service wing has a mansard roof. All of the roofs are of shingled slate.
- b. Cornice, eaves: A dentiled wooden cornice.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans (see data pages 7 & 8).
- 2. Stairways: The present stair was built later in the nineteenth century; evidence of ghost impressions in the plaster below the present stairs indicates that the original stair was quite steep.
- 3. Flooring: The main block has wide (6") boards covered later in the nineteenth century by narrow oak flooring.
- 4. Wall and Ceiling finish: The walls of the main block are plaster with plaster cornices.
- 5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The original doors were six panel with narrow vertical beaded joints.
- 6. Decorative features and trim: The windows in the main block have interior panelled shutters which when folded into the recesses at the sides form a panelled reveal.
- 7. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating (fireplaces, stoves, central): Three of the fireplaces (two in the main bedrooms on the second floor and one in the first floor entrance hall) have original mantels - simple turned column at each side supporting a simple entablature, "country" type detail, hearth and surround are stuccoed, painted black.

The fireplace in the present library (west wing) has a simple mantel with a simple shelf above a stuccoed surround and hearth.

The fireplace in the present living and dining rooms date from c. 1900, the dining room has a tile facing and hearth.

The fire boxes have generally been rebuilt and new fire brick linings added which follow the original contour which is a splay at each side with a rectangular recess.

The fireplace in present kitchen is a modern replacement of the original one, the bake oven to the south of the fireplace was restored when fireplace was rebuilt.

There is a fireplace in the basement room below the present library.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces south above the Genessee River.
2. Outbuildings: There is a nine-sided brick barn built in the early nineteenth century and an octagonal wooden gazebo by the river bank.
3. Landscaping and Walks, Enclosures: There is a garden on the north side with circular planting beds enclosed in a square shrubbery. The plan dates from the 1850's. (See data page 9 for copy of plan.)

Prepared by:
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Architectural Historian, HABS
June 6, 1984
From filed reports by:
Olaf Shelgren, Jr.
April 10, 1967 and
Marian Bromeley
April 18, 1967

PART III SOURCES OF INFORMATION

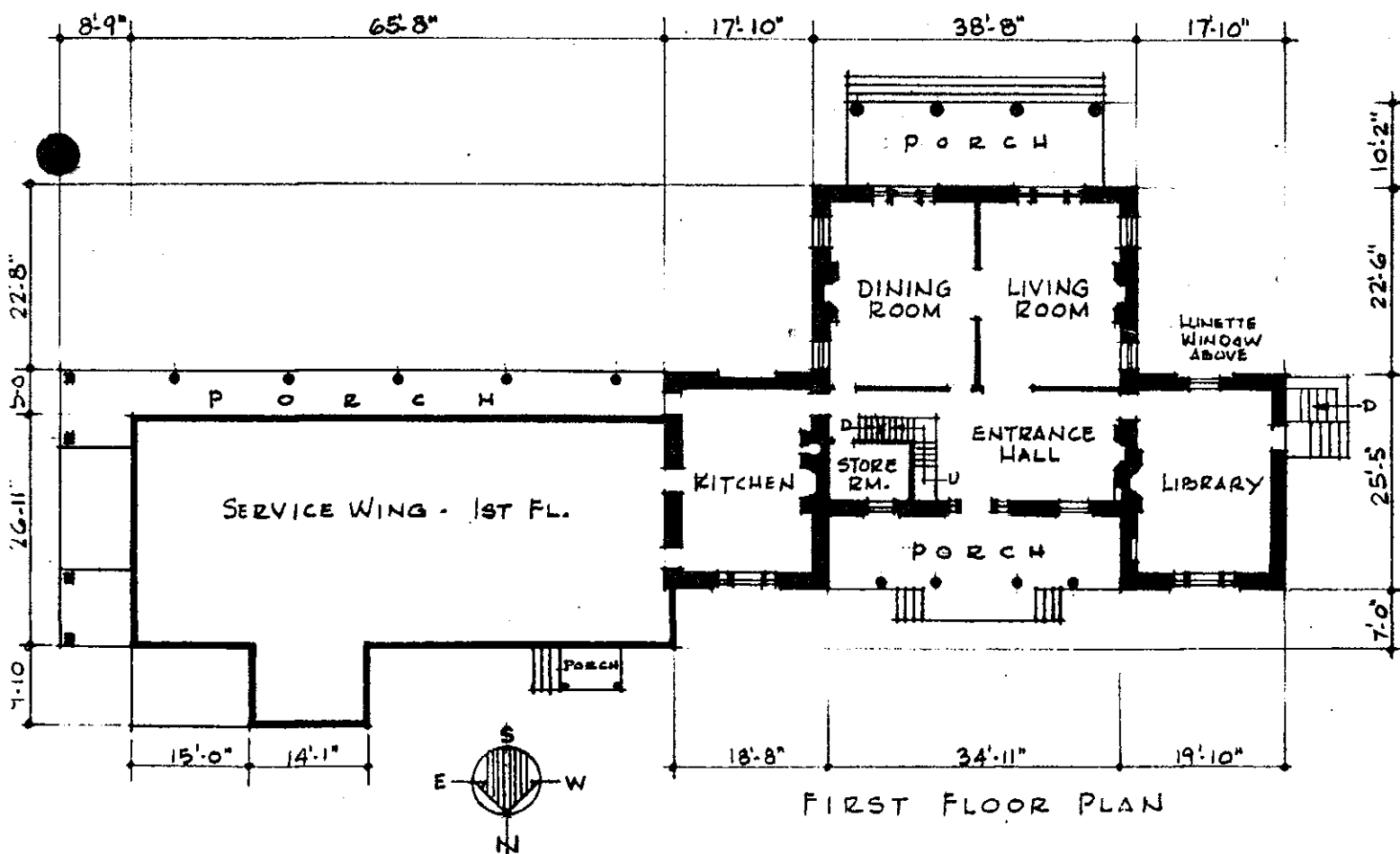
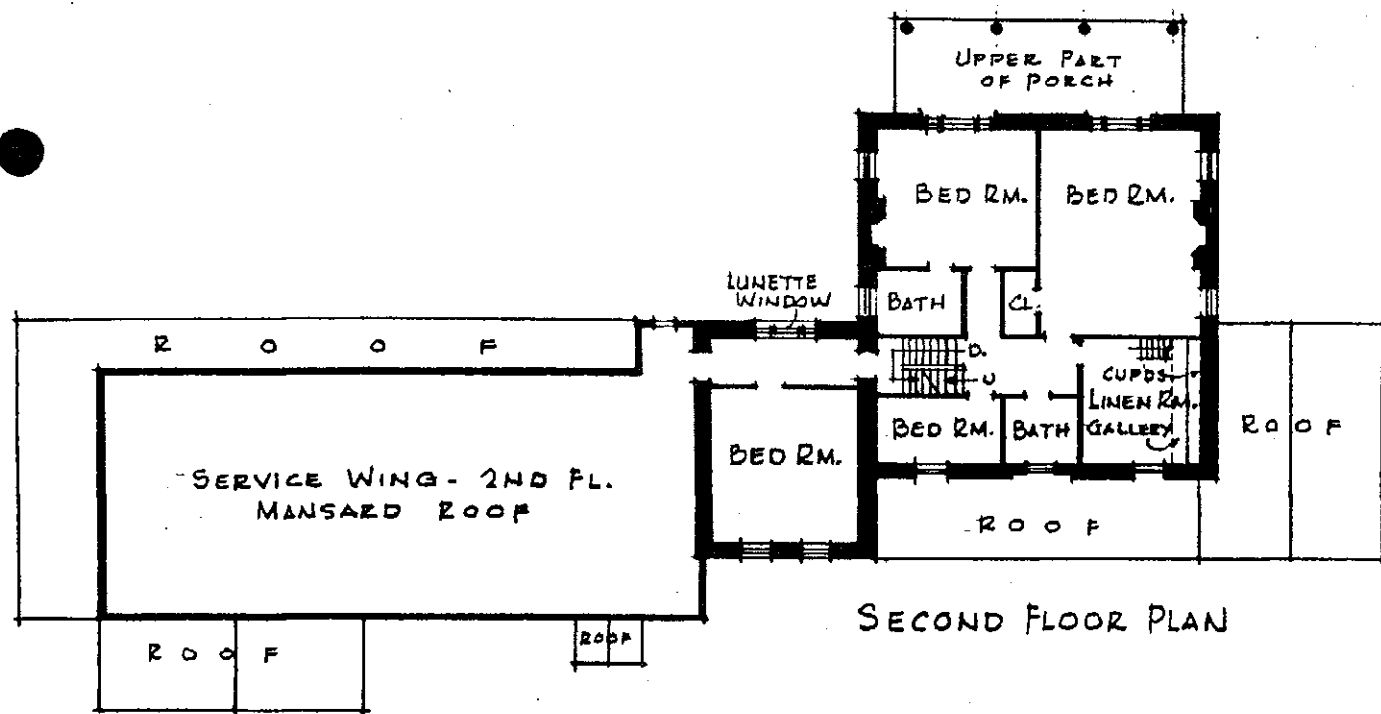
A. Secondary and published sources:

Arnold, C. P. Angelica, N.Y. Advocate, Vol IX., New York Public Library

Clune, Henry W. The Genessee. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963.

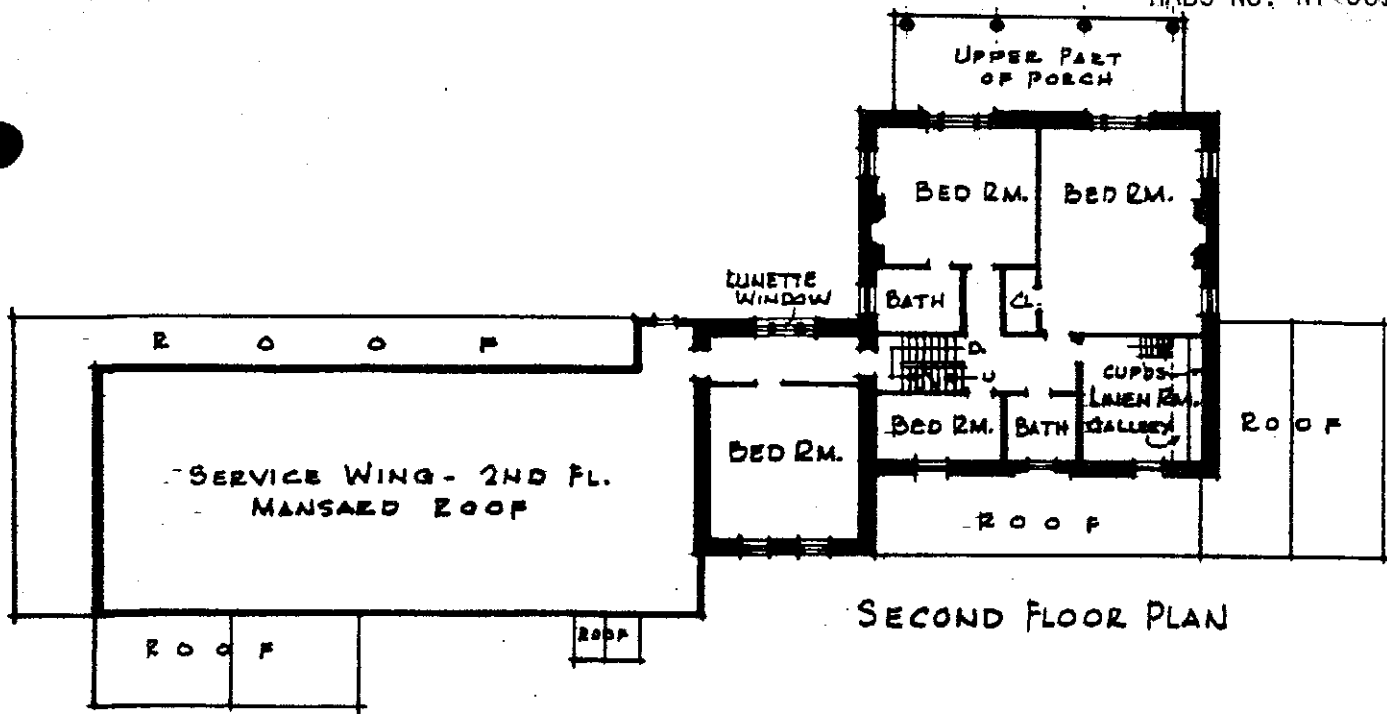
Dictionary of American Biography, Vol XI; 1933: Scribner's

Thornton, Winifred Knight. "A History of the Church Mansion, Belvidere,": New York History, New York Historical Association, July 1950, p. 300.

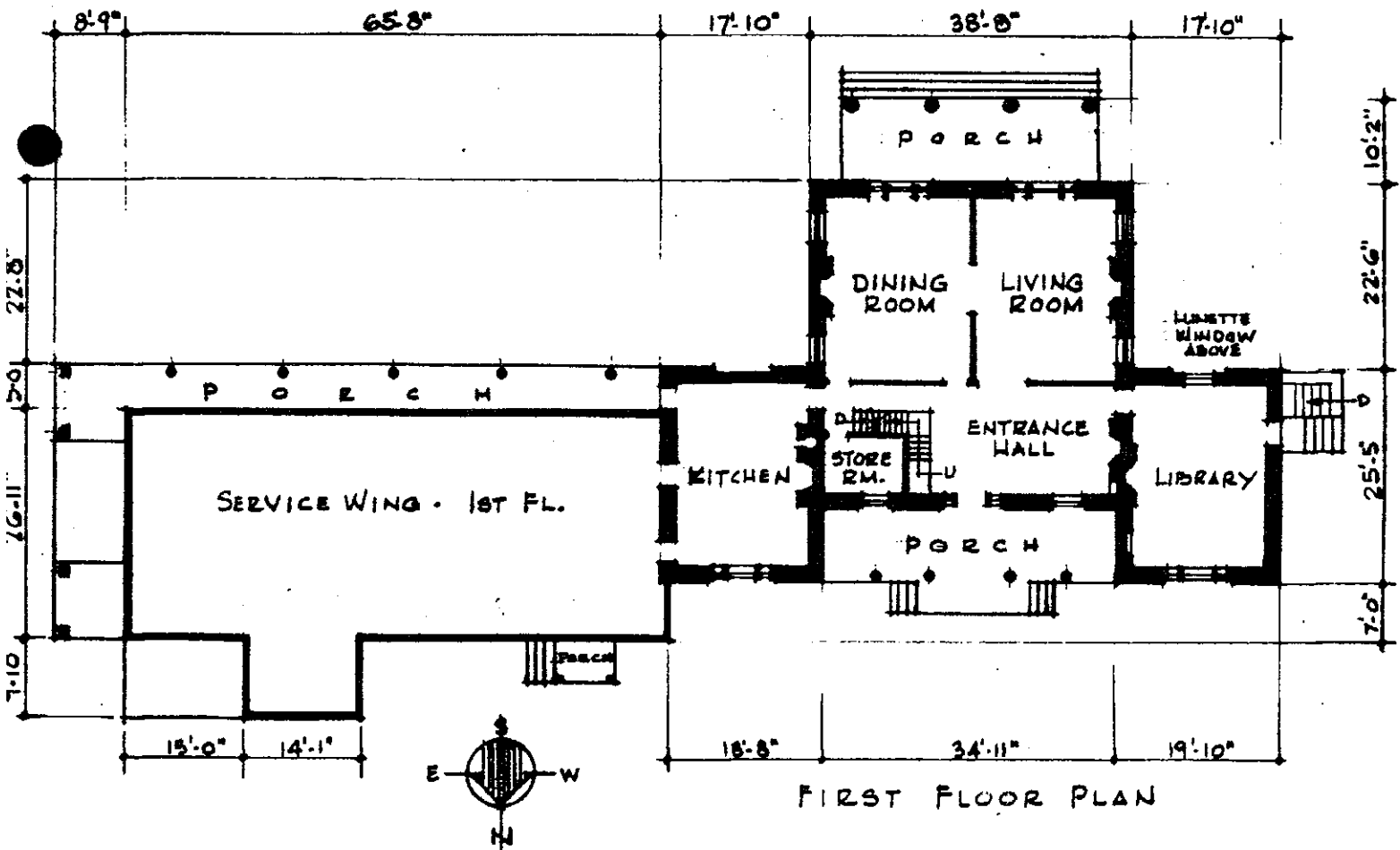


BELVIDERE, ALLEGANY COUNTY, NEW YORK STATE

ON THE UPPER GENESSEE RIVER, 4 MILES NORTH OF BELMONT, NEW YORK
MAIN HOUSE STARTED IN 1806, SERVICE WING - C. 1812, MANSARD ROOF OF SERVICE WING - C. 1870
HOME OF THE CHURCH FAMILY UNTIL 1892, NOW OWNED BY MR. & MRS. ROBERT D. BROMELEY



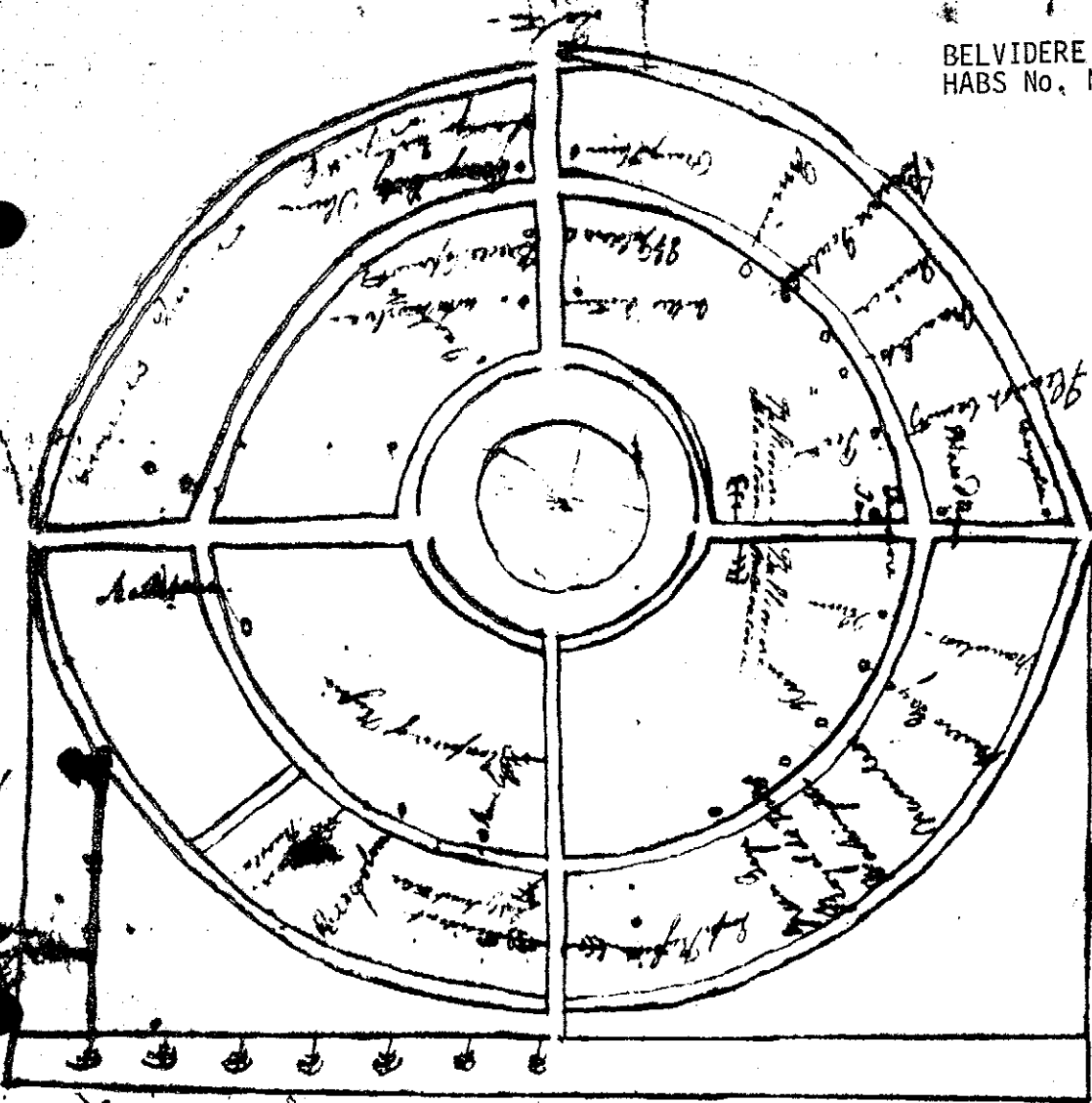
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

BELVIDERE, ALLEGANY COUNTY, NEW YORK STATE

ON THE UPPER GENESSEE RIVER, 4 MILES NORTH OF BELMONT, NEW YORK
 MAIN HOUSE STARTED IN 1806, SERVICE WING - C. 1812, MANSARD ROOF OF SERVICE WING - C. 1870
 HOME OF THE CHURCH FAMILY UNTIL 1892, NOW OWNED BY MR. & MRS. ROBERT B. DROMELEY



Plan no 185-a

These two machines are in the
from 1850 to 1852

1852

President
St. James
St. James
St. James
St. James
St. James
St. James
St. James

Write me Rich Church

I can't recall, this is the only thing I can
might be in the book in the Library of Congress

April 1852

John J. Dean